

IN THE WEEK'S NEW PLAYS

NEW PLAYS OF THE WEEK.

MONDAY—Lycium Theatre—Otis Skinner in "Mister Antonio."
Hudson Theatre—"Polyanna."
TUESDAY—Globe Theatre—"The Amber Empress."
WEDNESDAY—Empire Theatre—Margaret Anglin in "Caroline."



MARGARET ANGLIN
in
"CAROLINE"
Photo by AME DONATI.

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

THE difficulty which Edward Knoblauch had to overcome in "Paganini" the graceful play which reveals so well George Arliss' skill in characterization, was confronted every playwright who in the past would make the hero of his play a musician. The writers of farce and even of comedy have not found the task equally difficult. The concealed, petulant, truculent masters of composition are plausible enough when they are there to amuse. But to arouse our serious emotions, the executive as well as the creative musician is a difficult stage hero.

Perhaps the final renunciation of his love by the hero at the Criterion Theatre is the explanation of the public's feeling toward the musician in a serious play. Rather than see his violin shattered by her English lover, the Italian virtuoso intimated his resignation to the loss of the girl who has fled from England with him. The audience knew perfectly well that he would. No one was surprised that the artistic temperament asserted itself.

So the musician as a heroic figure must always puzzle the playwright. Mr. Knoblauch has chosen a most picturesque embodiment of all the eccentricities of the temperament. Perhaps the difference between Paganini and the normal man does not incline the audience to any greater confidence in him. The peculiarities of the tribe are those which do not belong to the nature of the men that heroes are made of.

Singularly enough the personality of Beethoven has recently attracted writers of plays, not only in the work of Rolland, but in the smaller piece "Adelaide," which can scarcely be called a drama. Mozart survived long as the figurehead of an Italian play which has never found its way into English. But in serious drama, the musical hero appears rarely. It is doubtful if Henry Miller ever found "Heartbreak," which Charles Klein and E. I. C. wrote for him, a popular work, although there was even less probability in his surroundings than there is in "Paganini." The authors put the time of the disappointed composer's story a century further back than the play of Mr. Knoblauch, "Nachtruhm," however, which came to the German stage at this same period, was modern, although the composer in the same way returned to hear his own creation performed as the work of another. Schnitzler's "Lieselein" had its musical atmosphere, but it was not essential. Richard Mansfield could not make popular even at the time his vogue was greatest "The First Violin."

But the musician as a figure of comedy is most grateful material for the playwright. There is deep in the minds of every audience the conviction that a musician is to be laughed at. So there is every readiness to take fun out of him. From the days of Ferdinand Gottschalk's amusing cellist in "Never Again" down to the tenor in "Twin Beds" there has been always a most hospitable attitude on the part of the public to the comedian who in the role of a musician was going to make laughter. Leo Ditrichstein, both in "The Conqueror" and "The Great Lover," has given the stage just the view of the musical characters for which it is seeking. Haber's concocted

WHERE TO DANCE.

The Ziegfeld Dance de Folies, on the roof of the New Amsterdam Theatre, will be closed all week while the after theatre rendezvous is being redecorated by Joseph Urban and the rehearsals for the new "Mighty Frolic," which will open Tuesday night, September 27, are going on. The new revue has been written by Gene Buck and Dave Stamper and it will be staged by Ned Wayburn.



EFFIE SHANNON
and PATRICIA COLLINGS in
"POLYANNA"

MABEL WILBER
in
"THE AMBER EMPRESS"



Helen Westley
with the
Washington Square
Players

hero of a pianist gets just the treatment he deserves, and is just what the average man thinks that a musician ought to be. The same is true of the barytone in "The Great Lover." For such purposes the musical hero is admirable. It is the effort to make him serious that so often fails.

The success which David Warfield enjoyed in "The Music Master" could not be mentioned as proof of the sympathy which the musical hero may arouse. Mr. Warfield is not a sentimental figure in this play. That sort of sympathy goes elsewhere in that famous play, and the same is true of Mr. Locke's "The Climax." A singing heroine may be admissible, even if the musical lover cannot expect to be taken seriously.

This prejudice never extended to any of the other arts on the stage. There have been painters and sculptors innumerable, as well as poets. They must possess in the public mind a dignity and earnestness which cannot be found in the musician.

It is said that the pantomime called by Winthrop Ames "Pierrot the Prodigious" is finding at the Booth Theatre the success which never accompanied its artistic triumph in the past. Mr. Ames is presenting the piece with a scenic loveliness it never enjoyed before. The naive bonhomie of Pierrot is uncommonly tasteful. It is indeed the quality of taste which Mr. Ames is bringing to the theatre. Undoubtedly he has had his influence in imparting this quality to other playhouses. No lovelier vision than the contrast of black and white and lavender that the second act reveals could well be imagined.

THE PLAYS THAT LAST.

List of Plays Continues to Grow as Season Advances.

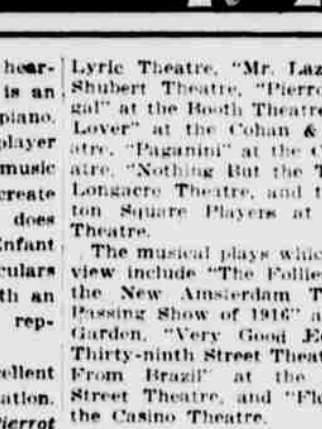
The plays that continue in New York are "The Boomerang" at the Belasco Theatre, "Seven Chances" at the Cohan Theatre, "His Bridal Night" at the Republic Theatre, "Fair and Warmer" at the Harris Theatre, "Cheating Cheaters" at the Eltinge Theatre, "Turn to the Right" at the Gaiety Theatre, "The Silent Witness" at the Fulton Theatre, "The Guilty Man" at the Astor Theatre, "Somebody's Luggage" at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, "The Big Show" at the Hippodrome, "Fast and Grow Fat" at the Globe Theatre, "The Flame" at the



OTIS SKINNER
in
"MISTER ANTONIO"



MARGARET MOWER in
"THE MAGICAL CITY" at the PALACE.



Helen Westley
with the
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Players

THE NEW PLAYS OF THE WEEK.

Drama of National and Foreign Origin to Be Seen Here.

Concerning the play to be seen at the Lycium Theatre on Tuesday, the secretary of the Charles Frohman Company makes the following brief statement:

Otis Skinner will begin his annual New York engagement at the Lycium Theatre on Monday, appearing in the new American comedy, "Mister Antonio," by Booth Tarkington. "Mister Antonio," which Mr. Tarkington wrote for Mr. Skinner, and in which Mr. Skinner appeared with great success at the Garrick Theatre several years ago, is an original play not based on any of the playwright's published stories. It is thoroughly American in theme and subject, and its scenes are laid in New York city and in a small Pennsylvania town. Mr. Skinner plays the title role—a role entirely different from any that he has assumed on the New York stage.

In the supporting company are Joseph Brennan, Eleanor Woodruff, Robert Harrison, John McCabe, Walter F. Scott, Louise Symeth, Frances Landy, Patterson McNutt, Ernest A. Filson and others.

The herald of "Polyanna," on the other hand, describes the advent of that play in language as ecstatic as the theme of the drama. Hear him: "Polyanna," the exponent of gladness, will take possession of the Hudson Theatre to-morrow night. "Polyanna," the glad book, inspired the play. Eleanor H. Porter wrote the stories and Catherine Chisholm Cushman, the title role—a role entirely different from any that he has assumed on the New York stage.

largely for clothing and food on the contributions of the Ladies' Aid Society of a rich city church. Out of the barrels sent by these good women came about all the Christmas sunshine Polyanna knew, and it was not often the donations varied from the practical things of life.

"Once she longed for a doll, and had her father mention it in a letter to the 'Ladies' Aid,' but when the barrel came, instead of what she hoped and prayed for, there came a pair of crutches. Here's where Polyanna's glad spirit came to her rescue—she was glad because she didn't have to use them. That is the spirit of Polyanna."

"This philosophy of the glad girl has spread around the country like the sunshine of spring. It has started glad clubs and glad games, and it runs through the action of the play like the thread of a tune in a score of music. The comedy is an April shower of contrasts, one is told by the records of the success elsewhere, but the dominant note rings with the joy of living. The interpreting cast is of exceptional importance and speaks the best treatment of the respective roles. Patricia Collings will embody Polyanna, the dear glad girl; Effie Shannon and Herbert Kelcey the rigid New England spinster and the lonely doctor, Philip Merivale; the grouchy hermit, Jesse Bascy; the joyful housemaid, Maude Granger; Helen Weatherly and Maud Hensford the 'Ladies' Aid'; and Shoshanna Jones and Taylor Graves the orphan, the latter of whom becomes finally a partner in Polyanna's gladness for life.

"Polyanna" has been tried and not found wanting in the critical and popular judgment of Chicago and Philadelphia, and will come here with its best foot forward and the prospect of being at home in the Hudson for a long time."

Gez whiz, one might pardonably observe, not to mention by gosh!

MOTION PICTURES.

STRAND—Valentine Grant makes her second appearance at the Strand Theatre as a screen star in "The Daughter of MacGregor," which is the story of a Scotch lassie who runs away from a staid father to a rough and ready camp in America, where she finds independence and happiness. Other Strand features are a review, a zoological series, a fashion pictorial, a cartoon and a comedy.

The orchestra will play a Tchaikovsky overture, a march, soloists for the week include Grace Hoffman, soprano; Wallace MacDonald, barytone, and Alfred Newman, boy pianist.

RIALTO—H. B. Warner is featured this week in "The Vagabond Prince," a romantic story by J. C. Hawke, recounting the adventures of Prince Tonio of Balthasia. As a novelty Helen Macdonough of the Metropolitan opera ballet will dance "The Firefly" with special light effects. The soloists of the week include Vincent Ballaster, soprano; barytone, Mme. Jean Maubourg of the Metropolitan Opera Company and Alberto Bachman, violinist. "Vampire Ambrose," a Keystone comedy, will also be shown.

BROADWAY—Edna Goodrich will be seen at the Broadway Theatre for the week in "The House of Lies," a society drama of the very rich, produced by the Morosco-Parmount companies. Burton Holmes travel pictures, Bray cartoons, weekly news pictures and a comedy will also be shown.

NEW YORK ROOF—Anita Stewart in the Vitaphone photograph "The Combat" will be the feature at Loew's New York Roof on Monday. Other features of the week will be "The Girl in the Hat," "The Shine Girl," and "The Stone Comedy Tuesday," "Behind the Lines" Wednesday, the first episode of a new serial; "The Crimson Stain Mystery," with Maurice Costello, Thursday; "The Girl in the Hat," Friday; "The Dark Silence," Friday; "The Unwelcome Mother," Saturday and "The Wheels of Justice," Sunday. ACADEMY OF MUSIC—William Farnum in "The Fires of Conscience" will be the feature for the first four days of the week at the Academy of Music.

the preliminary announcements concerning the coming opera of the week, "The Amber Empress," a new debutante in the field of musical plays, will make her bow to New York audiences at the Globe Theatre on Tuesday evening. The announcement is an interesting one, since Madison Core and Joseph Riter, under whose management the new production has been made, have been indefatigable in their intention to place this, their first venture into the musical field, on the same pleasing level with their auspicious entry into the dramatic producing environment last season, with Mrs. Fiske in "Herself Susan."

The score of "The Amber Empress" is the work of Zed Paley and has been awarded enthusiastic praise by those privileged to hear it in advance. While at all times musically it is replete with numbers certain to attain whistling popularity, conspicuous among the latter are "There's Always One You Can't Forget," "Love Flies Everywhere," "Don't Lose Your Way, Little Boy," "There's Nothing So Uncertain as a Dead Sure Thing," "Commanding Eyes," "Open Your Heart to Love," "A Kiss Affects Me Most of All" and "It's the Only One for Me." An orchestra of forty, under the direction of Max Benlik, interprets the Paganini music.

The book, by Marcus C. Connolly, recounts the amusing adventures of an American widow, who, while occupying an elaborate Venetian villa during the season, discovers a love affair between her son and the star of a motion picture company touring Italy in quest of "locations." Her efforts to break up the romance and her subsequent surrender to the most insistent of her own suitors form a story told in interesting and humorous fashion throughout the two acts.

Corey and Riter have supplied a promising cast, including Frank Lator, Emma Janvier, Thomas Conkey, Mabel Wilber, Donald MacDonald, Louise Allen, John Daly Murphy, Daisy Revell, Mary Harris, Claire Lorraine, Andrew Higginson, Celia Campbell and numerous others. There is a large chorus, chosen as carefully for its pliability as for its musical ability.

The opening of the regular season of the Empire Theatre will take place on Wednesday evening, when Margaret Anglin will return to the stage that was the scene of her first triumphs. She will appear in "Caroline," a new comedy by William Somerset Maugham, the first that he has written since "The Lady of the Camellias." Other plays by Mr. Maugham which have been successful in New York are "Lady Frederick," "Jack Straw," "Mrs. Dot" and "Smithy." Mr. Maugham, who was a doctor before he was a playwright, has been serving at the front in the British army since the war began. He obtained leave of absence to come to America for the presentation of his play and it will be produced under his personal direction.

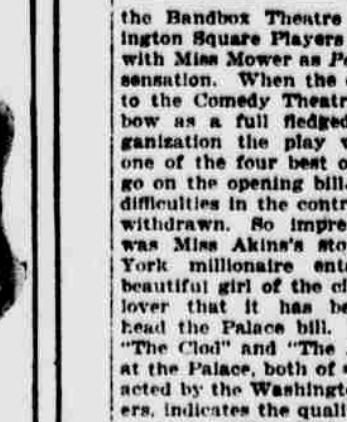
"Caroline" was presented in London last autumn and the season out at the New Theatre there. In it a man and a woman have been waiting for one another for ten years. Suddenly the barrier between them is removed—the woman's impossible husband dies—and then, very much to their surprise, they find that they do not wish to marry.

Miss Anglin plays the woman, of course, and important parts will be taken by Charles Dalton, Rex McDougall, Arthur Chesley, Florence Edney and Viva Birkett.

Zoe Akina, whose sensational emotional playlet, "The Sacred City," will be seen next week at the Palace Theatre with Margaret Mower in the leading part, is regarded by critics as one of the most talented women writers in America. Though she is not a native of New York, she has penetrated to the heart of the city and has written a play "Tapa" which was acted by a native company last spring.

She was born and has lived in St. Louis, where her father was for many years postmaster. Two books of her verse have been published and have made a deep impression. "Tapa," which has been published in the "Modern Drama Series," was promised for performance in New York last spring by Emmanuel Reicher, but failed to reach the rehearsal stage because of the failure of the company. It is soon to be seen on the Pacific coast under the direction of Miss Jessie Bonstelle.

The "Magical City" was first acted at the



Miss Alice Kauser.

NO WAR PLAYS IN EUROPE.

But American Movies Are Popular Everywhere, Says Miss Kauser.

One of the things to make an American feel at home almost anywhere abroad, according to Miss Alice Kauser, play broker, who returned recently on board the Frederik VIII, after a stay of several months in Europe, is the omnipresence of American "movies." She found American screen stars equally well liked in England and in Austria and almost as well known there as at home. In Vienna and Budapest she saw many American feature films extensively advertised, and in England "The Birth of a Nation," she says, is now enjoying a great vogue. The present popularity of the motion pictures abroad, she says, is due to the soldiers from the trenches, either wounded or on furlough, who turn to the pictures for amusement and diversion in such numbers that the theatres are nearly always crowded.

Miss Kauser, who is the niece of Etelka Gerster, the Hungarian soprano, went to Germany several months ago in search of new material for the American stage and visited the principal playhouses of Germany, Austria and Hungary while she was gone.

"There are no war plays being produced in any of those countries," Miss Kauser says. "War plays are not successful. Theatres are well patronized, but war plays are not liked. The people feel that this war is too deep and vital a thing to be treated by even the best dramatists. Moiner wrote a play, but it did not last, and he is now back at the front as a war correspondent of one of the great German papers."

"The failure to respond to war plays does not indicate that the theatre in Germany and Austria is on the decline," Miss Kauser says. "On the contrary, the theatre is bright and attractive in spite of the war and several good things are being produced."

"The New York success 'Romance' has been playing to packed houses in Berlin, and another American play, 'The New York Idea' is shortly to be produced at the Rheinhardt Theatre. German theatregoers like American plays."

"One of the most popular pieces on the German stage at present is a fantastic comedy in verse called 'Seven Days,' which is, however, in no way related to the play of the same name produced in New York recently. 'Vienna and Budapest run to reviews mostly, but the effect of the war can be seen in the economy of production. The reviews are by no means as lavish in production as the American reviews or as reviews were formerly in those places."

Miss Kauser brought back with her two new plays by Hermann Sudermann which she says are to be produced in this country shortly.

"Music and the opera," Miss Kauser says, "have never had such a season as the last. Under the food dictatorship it is almost impossible to entertain otherwise. One cannot give a dinner party on bread tickets and meat tickets, so when a hostess wishes to entertain she gives a box party."

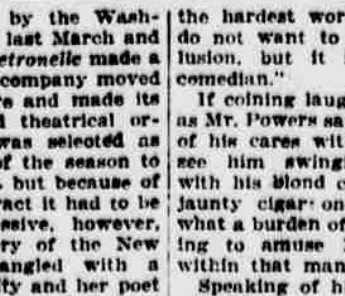
"The most popular musical piece of the season has been 'Princess Chardak,' a typical light Viennese operetta by Karlman. The music is quite tuneful, and it may be imported to this country shortly."

"Franz Lehar, composer of 'The Merry Widow' and 'The Count of Luxembourg,' has been in the trenches most of the time, but has found time to write a few marches and patriotic airs."

"The season has already started at the Charlottenburg Opera House and the Royal Opera in Berlin will open shortly."

"There will be no dearth of good music in Germany," Miss Kauser says, "no matter how stringent the food situation may become."

The only mail Miss Kauser received while she was abroad was one steamer letter, which went across on the same boat with her and trailed her from Berlin to Vienna and from Vienna to Budapest. She was able to communicate with her New York office only by wireless.



Miss Kauser.

JAMES POWERS ON COMEDY.

He Tells of Some of the Best Ways of Creating It.

Spontaneous humor on the stage, according to the inimitable James Powers, comedian in "Somebody's Luggage" at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, is so rare as to be almost negligible. Making jokes is a serious business, he says, and has made him old before his time. That is how he was able to write his "Memoirs of Ninety-three Years," which he is going to have published, he says, as soon as he can find a discriminating publisher with a true sense of literary value.

"The comedian who tells you that he waits until the first night and then acts on the inspiration of the moment is chaffing with you. Don't believe him. Such a comedian would last just about one consecutive night. The funniest comedians on the stage are

the hardest workers off the stage. Do not want to destroy anybody's illusion, but it is no joke being a comedian."

If coming laughs is really as serious as Mr. Powers says he bears the weight of his cares with much grace and to see him swinging along Broadway with his monocle, checked suit and jaunty cigar, one would never guess what a burden of secret sorrow a laughing to amuse New York is hidden within that manly bosom.

Speaking of his return to the stage after an unsuccessful attempt to remain in seclusion Mr. Powers says, "I tried to imitate an automobile block-out and retire, but I could not stay away." This remark, however, has an ulterior motive: it is to lead up to the discussion of automobiles. He has a new automobile and he does not care who knows it, but he insists that it was not manufactured in Detroit by a certain well known peace propagandist. "This is a regular car," he says.

The high cost of gasoline, however, does not seem to be worrying him just as much as it should, for he says he has almost got it figured out how he will not have to use any gasoline. He has been reading the advertisements, he says, of a new "whatsit" for the car, which saves 50 per cent of the gasoline. Another advertisement says that for \$18.75 you can buy a "what'sit" for the engine which will save 25 per cent of the gasoline.

"Just as soon as I can find some thing to save that other 25 per cent of gas I won't care how high the price goes."

He was touring this past summer and stopped over night at a fashionable inn. The bill next morning for himself and Mrs. Powers was \$21.50. As he was paying with a hard earned—that's what he says—cash to the hatched faced proprietor Mr. Powers asked him:

"Do you live here yourself?"

"Yes," the proprietor of the expensive inn said. "Why?"

"Well, I don't see how you can afford it," Mr. Powers said as he glanced up at the car.

In all innocence the interviewer told Mr. Powers that he had heard it rumored that he had a great string of yarns.

"Oh, no, that's not me. That's my wife. She is always knitting. You ought to see that red knitter she had for me last winter."

Before returning to the stage in "Somebody's Luggage," Mr. Powers had been on Broadway for about seven months, and his absence was beginning to be felt by those who are fond of the hilarious comedy and clean, hearty humor of which he is the reigning master and who have learned to appreciate his appearance with a peculiarly delicate sense of humor.

"During the time I was away," Mr. Powers said, "I read hundreds of comedies and I had many private offers before I found a suitable vehicle for my return to the stage. I have finally refused to accept any play that had the least thing about it which was suggestive. It is a remarkable thing how few comedies are left which do not have something of the kind about them. But in any case, I have never permitted myself to be suggestive in my parts, and certainly do not intend to begin so in my old age."

When he was asked about the intensely amusing piece of business in "Somebody's Luggage," which is a struggle with a broken steamer and a wheel which tries to get out of a crowded cabaret, he said:

"Nearly everybody has had such experience with one of those folding canvas steamer chairs. I have often enough, and most of them have had difficulty in folding them. I think that is why the humor of the situation appeals to most audiences. They have been there themselves and they appreciate the situation. That's more or less the secret of water-gate success I may have obtained. I try to make the appeal universal."

He tells of some of the best ways of creating it.

Vaudeville and Burlesque.

PALACE THEATRE—Bessie Clayton, assisted by Constantine Koleff of the Ballet Russe, and Lester Sheehan, present a "Magical City," a free verse drama by Zoe Akina, with Margaret Mower, third one act play taken from Washington Square Players.

will be presented by Arthur Hinks. Mildred Macmillan, comic dancer, in aquatic spectacle, "Holidays in Dreamland," Doc Dockstader in monologue, Bob Royce in songs, Charles Grapen in "Poughkeepsie" and Wayne Pyle, concert pianist, are also on the programme.

COLUMBIA THEATRE—The Bowery Burlesquers will present a new two act burlesque called "At Lobster Beach," by John Raines, with music by Will Carey, this week. The scene of the first act is a seaside resort of the confined merriest and the scene of the second act is a prison where the welfare leaguers enjoy a life of unrestrained mirth. The cast includes Billy Foster, Frank Harcourt, Edna Green, Mary Seamon, Libby Hart, Elsie Alkema, Charles Jensen, Grace Anderson and a large chorus.

COLONIAL THEATRE—The vaudeville season will open to-morrow with a matinee, with Jack Norworth, who returns from the years in London music halls for opening. Dorothy Tovey, Edna Harris, Elsie Harris, and other dancers; Leo Beer, in patter songs; Stanley, humorist-burlesquer, Flannigan and Edwards, George Moore and Cordelia Hunger and others are on the programme.

ALHAMBRA THEATRE—Emma Carus and Larry Combs, in songs and dances, head the programme this week. Al Herman, Truly Shattuck and Martha Golden, J. C. Nugent in "The Meal Hound," O'Rourke and Glides; Ames and Wirthrup in "Aught in a Jam," the first Danubies, the Musical Johnnies, and Van and Belle, boomerang throwers, also are featured.